

fruits, and vegetables reinforce this message. The morning glory, for example, symbolizes the light of truth, for it opens at the break of day and closes in the evening. The bramble, which was believed to be the burning bush in which the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses, was associated with divine love that cannot be consumed. Grains of wheat can allude to the bread of the Last Supper, but they can also symbolize resurrection, because the grain must fall to earth to regenerate. Like wheat, or peas, man must die and be buried before achieving eternal life.

Vase of Flowers is signed but not dated. Although De Heem's chronology is not easy to reconstruct, he probably executed this painting in Utrecht around 1660.⁷ The painting has more elaborate rhythms in its forms and a more complex iconography than does De Heem's similar composition from the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, which is signed and dated 1654. However, it cannot date too much later than the Dresden painting from the mid-1650s (fig. 1), which contains many like elements, including a poppy at the top of the composition and the image of a cross in the reflection on the vase. In any event, the composition must have been known by Abraham Mignon (q.v.) in Utrecht, for after he joined De Heem's workshop in 1669 he executed a *Vase of Flowers* that shares many similar elements.⁸

Notes

1. The names of the previous owners Rothschild and McIntosh were provided by Nathan and Nathan, but without documentation.

2. See Wheelock in Washington 1989a, 14–15.
3. See Lawrence O. Goedde, "A Little World Made Cunningly: Dutch Still Life and Ekphrasis," in Washington 1989a, 40.
4. For an analysis of the *Flower Piece with Shell and Skull* in Dresden (fig. 1), see Utrecht 1991, cat. 28, 181–184.
5. For the identity of the plants and animals in this painting, see Segal in Utrecht 1991, 187.
6. Much has been written on the symbolism of flowers in Dutch art. For an excellent overview of the problem, see Sam Segal, "The Symbolic Meaning of Flowers," in Amsterdam 1982b, 12–25; see also Segal in Utrecht 1991, 182–184.
7. For a similar De Heem composition, also undated, see Fechner 1981, 28, 169, pl. 62–63.
8. For this painting, see Rotterdam, 1989, cat. 23, 94–95.

References

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| 1958 | Bury: 175–177. |
| 1958 | Nicholson: 145. |
| 1963 | Walker: 198–199, color repro. |
| 1964 | Walker: 198–199, color repro. |
| 1965 | Pavière: 20, colorplate 7. |
| 1965 | NGA: 66, no. 1649. |
| 1968 | NGA: 58, no. 1649, repro. |
| 1975 | NGA: 172–173, repro. |
| 1982b | Amsterdam: 12–25. |
| 1984 | Wheelock: 18–19, color repro. |
| 1985 | NGA: 199, repro. |
| 1988 | Grimm: 143. |
| 1989 | Rotterdam: no. 23. |
| 1989a | Washington: 14–15. |
| 1991 | Utrecht: no. 30. |
| 1992 | NGA: 127 color repro. |

Jan van der Heyden

1637–1712

JAN VAN DER HEYDEN was born 5 March 1637 in Gorkum, the third of eight children. His eldest brother, Goris, was a mirror maker by trade, and Van der Heyden's first training in art came from a local glass painter. The difficult—and irreversible—technique of painting images on the back of a sheet of glass enjoyed a certain popularity at the time, and several works of this type by Van der Heyden have survived. On 26 June 1661, in Amsterdam, he married Sara ter Hiel of Utrecht. He is known to have been practicing as an artist at this time, but no dated paintings survive from before 1664.

Van der Heyden's oeuvre is largely composed of cityscapes and other depictions of groups of buildings, although he did paint about forty pure landscapes. Some of his works are relatively faithful depictions of a real location, but many others are entirely imaginary architectural fantasies. Typically, his scenes are bathed in a brilliant, crisp light of almost unnatural clarity and characterized by remarkable attention to detail. Throughout his paintings, minute features are painstakingly rendered with the greatest precision, and yet he never seems to have allowed this technique to stand between him

and the creation of a balanced and harmonious composition. The great skill with which Van der Heyden distributes areas of light and shade and his general mastery of subtle atmospheric effects are in no small way responsible for the coherence and unity of his works.

Although his artistic output was considerable, the majority of documentary records of Jan van der Heyden's life concerns activities in fields totally unrelated to the arts. In 1670 he was appointed Amsterdam's overseer of streetlights, and in 1673 he assumed responsibility for the city's fire brigade. He was clearly greatly preoccupied with the problem of how to fight fires effectively, and, with his brother Nicolaes, devoted much time between 1668 and 1671 to inventing a new, highly successful water pumping mechanism. In 1679, he bought land on the Koesstraat on which to build a house and fire engine factory. In 1690 he and his eldest son, Jan, published a large, illustrated book on the fire hose, entitled *Beschrijving der nieuwljks uitgevonden en geotrojerde Slangbrandspuiten*.

When he died on 28 March 1712, Van der Heyden was a wealthy man and had in his possession some seventy of his own paintings. His influence on other seventeenth-century artists was relatively limited, but he was an extremely important source for architectural painters of the following century, both in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe.

Bibliography

- Houbraken 1753, 3: 80–82.
HdG 1907–1927, 8 (1927): 325–426.
Wagner 1970.
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Van Eeghen 1973.
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1968.13.1 (2349)

An Architectural Fantasy

c. 1670

Oil on oak, 49.7 x 70.7 (19⁹/₁₆ x 27¹³/₁₆)
Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund

Technical Notes: The support consists of a single piece of oak, with horizontal grain. The support is in stable condition, although it has developed a moderate concave warp both along and across the grain. There are a number of fairly small cracks in the panel, including one about 10 cm long in the

lower left, three smaller ones along the top edge, and another near the center of the bottom edge. In general, the edges of the panel have suffered minor damages, and the extreme top left corner is missing.¹

The panel is covered with a thin white ground. Examination of the painting with infrared reflectography did not reveal any clear evidence of underdrawing. The paint is probably in an oil medium and is applied fairly smoothly. In some areas the application is wet into wet, and in others there is evidence of discrete layering. The figures appear to be painted on top of the background. In general the paint and ground layers are in fairly good condition. Small losses associated with the damages to the support mentioned above have occurred. As the ultraviolet photograph shows, there is extensive retouching from past restorations throughout the sky. In some areas, particularly along the edges, these cover abrasion, wear, and small losses. In other areas, however, the overpaint appears to be covering small linear "staining." Much of the overpaint covers areas of original paint, and in general the retouching in the sky is heavy, opaque, and discolored. Extensive strengthening has been carried out in certain areas, for example, in some of the clouds and in the balustrade. The surface of the painting is covered with a number of layers of aged natural resin varnish. No restoration on the painting has been undertaken at the National Gallery since its acquisition.

Provenance: Woltgraft family, Kampen.² Catellan family, Freiburg im Breisgau, prior to 1816; (sale, Paris, 16 January 1816, no. 6);³ Charles Ferdinand de Bourbon, Duc de Berry [d. 1820], Paris;⁴ by inheritance to his widow, Marie Caroline Ferdinande Louise de Naples, Duchesse de Berry, Paris; (sale, Paris, 4–6 April 1837, no. 72); Hazard.⁵ Charles Heusch, London, by 1842;⁶ F. Heusch, London, by 1854. Possibly Lionel Nathan de Rothschild [d. 1879], London; Alfred Charles de Rothschild [1842–1918], London, by 1884;⁷ by inheritance to his nephew, Lionel Nathan de Rothschild [d. 1942], London; by inheritance to his son, Edmund Leopold de Rothschild, London; (Thomas Agnew and Sons, London).

Exhibitions: *Duchesse de Berry Collection*, London, 1834, no. 112. Possibly British Institution, 1838, no. 91.⁸ *Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, (Winter Exhibition)*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1886, no. 83 (as *View of a Chateau*). *Dutch Pictures, 1450–1750*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1952–1953, no. 469 (as *The Gate of a Palace*). *In the Light of Vermeer*, Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1966, no. 31 (as *Chateau in a Park*).

THIS PAINTING evokes the pleasures of elegant country life. Gentle sunlight illuminates the façade of a handsome Palladian villa situated on a small rise in a park. Passing through the magnificent classical gateway, a master and his servant approach a waiting beggar woman with a child on her back. In front of the gate a man seated on a fragment of antique sculpture works on the harness of two sleek hunting dogs. The casual poses of the other figures—the two men who in eager discussion lean on the garden balustrade, the servant who lounges in the doorway of the villa, and the dogs who sniff, urinate, or curl